



BARRINGTON COMPREHENSIVE BUSINESS INVENTORY A FULL CIRCLE PROGRAM

**Funded by
Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning and the Northwest Municipal Conference.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Village of Barrington received a grant to implement the Full Circle program, a community mapping and planning tool, through the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) and the Northwest Municipal Conference (NWMC). The goal of the program is to create and maintain a comprehensive business inventory for the Village. The business data collected will be used for to perform land use analysis, to develop an online business directory, will be incorporated into the Village-wide GIS, and will collect and maintain data for supplementary emergency response purposes. The grant provided funding for the Village to hire two interns, for a total of 800 hours to inventory the commercial businesses in the community.

Before the interns could begin gathering data, a survey form was developed and the community was given an introduction to the Full Circle program. An Access form was developed by the department of Economic and Community Development and GIS staff to outline their goals and data needs. Then, an interdepartmental meeting with department heads was held to discuss how this information fit into existing data resources, how other department could play a role in keeping it update, and what other data could be collected in the survey to aid other departments. After a comprehensive review, the Barrington planner and GIS analyst created a template form with all of the information that they wished to collect in the survey. CMAP staff and Village staff worked together to structure the form to meet their needs. Data collected included business types, square footage, occupancy status, façade condition, handicap accessibility data, parking information, and more. Upon development of the electronic survey, the community was notified about the goals and benefits of the Full Circle program in an article was published in the Village Newsletter. To prepare the business community for the upcoming survey, an email was also sent to all contacts in the existing Village merchant database. Lastly, an informational handout for business and property owners was prepared for distribution during the field surveying. These materials explained the importance of this information to the village and how it could be used to better serve the community needs.

Due to limitations on time, equipment, and some application issues, data collection was conducted by paper survey through interviews with businesses and field observations by the interns. Of the 915 commercial addresses identified, the interns succeeded in interviewing business owners, managers, or other contacts from 690 businesses. Most of the interviews took place on-site with no appointment by visiting the businesses during regular business hours. Occasionally, appointments were made to conduct the interviews, especially for larger corporate offices. While walking and driving through the commercial corridors, the interns also identified all vacant business spaces that have been previously difficult to track and record. In order to obtain the data regarding vacant properties, the leasing or sales agent for the property was contacted via telephone. Lastly, while in the field, a photograph was taken of each commercial space, regardless if it was occupied or vacant.

Once every commercial property was inventoried, the data was reviewed to identify missing or erroneous information. In instances where a business contact could not be reached for an interview or where a commercial space was vacant, the interns used other reliable data sources at the village, such as building permit files, to complete as much information as possible on the surveys. As a result, the interns were able to obtain the most critical datasets (property owner contact, business contact, emergency contact, number of employees, and size of business space) for 95 percent of all businesses.

Upon completion of all data collection, the survey data was reviewed with the Village's GIS to spatially analyze the results. The data indicates that Barrington has a balanced commercial base with nearly 2.7 million square feet of occupied commercial space including 368 office units, 163 businesses providing services, 117 retailers, 40 restaurants, and 2 other businesses. Of the five commercial corridors in the Village, 31 percent of all occupied commercial space is located in the East-West Northwest Highway area, 28 percent is located in the downtown, 14 percent is located in the North-South Northwest Highway area, 14 percent is located in the South Barrington Road area, and 13 percent is located in the West Main Street area. Furthermore, 87 percent of all commercial space in the Village is occupied. Various charts, graphs, and maps have been created to illustrate the concentration of business types, employees, and vacancies. Such charts and graphs are linked to the database through the Village GIS and will automatically update when new data is inputted on an ongoing basis. Four maps are attached to this document to indicate how the collected data can be spatially represented.

The Village will maintain the database in various ways. First, new business data and removal of vacant building information will be collected through the zoning certificate (business registration) process. Second, vacancies will also be monitored by staff in various departments and reported to Economic and Community Development staff. Lastly, a yearly survey will be sent to all business contacts to verify current data. All collected data will be maintained in CMAP's online database.

The data collected through the Full Circle program has a multitude of uses for the Village. The data is currently being used by the Department of Community and Economic Development for business recruitment and retention. Non-sensitive datasets within this database will serve as the basis for the Village's online business directory, which is scheduled to go live by the summer of 2010. Furthermore, the data is being used to undertake a comprehensive analysis of its commercial sectors and establishes baseline data for use in evaluating current and future commercial land use trends. Such analysis will be very useful to the Village when updating the Village Comprehensive Plan in 2010. Lastly, this data was used to create the Village's first comprehensive, standardized, and fully accessible database of contact information for commercial properties for all Village departments. This database of business contacts is especially useful to the emergency responders from the Village's Police, Fire, and Public Works departments. In summary, the Full Circle program is a huge success in the Village of Barrington. Without the assistance from CMAP through the Full Circle program, the Village would not have been able to conduct such a thorough, timely, and useful business inventory.

- [Map of Commercial Districts in Barrington](#) [PDF]
- [Land use Map of Downtown Barrington](#) [PDF]
- [Map of Dining Establishments in Barrington](#) [PDF]
- [Map of Building Conditions in Barrington](#) [PDF]